

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 QUITO 06723 101526Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7158

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 6723

STADIS//////////

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: POINT PFOR EC
SUBJECT: GENERAL GONZALEZ ASYLUM, ETC.

REF: STATE 214385

1. I DO NOT SHARE YOUR CONCERN THAT WE MAY BECOME IDENTIFIED WITH GONZALEZ COUP ATTEMPT. THE ONLY ACTIVITY IN WHICH WE ARE ENGAGED IS A DISCREET ATTEMPT TO FIND OUT WHAT POLICY CHANGES ARE IN THE WIND AND WHAT THEY MEAN FOR THE USG. THAT IS WHAT I ASSUME OUR ROLE TO BE HERE. I CONSIDER SUCH "CURIOSITY" NEITHER "INORDINATE" OR LIKELY TO AROUSE CONCERN WITHIN THE GOE.

2. THE CONVERSATIONS REPORTED QUITO 6656 WHICH "HEIGHTENED" YOUR CONCERN TOOK PLACE SEPTEMBER 8 AT THE BRAZILIAN NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION. THE COUP HAVING JUST TAKEN PLACE AND GOE OFFICIALS CONSPICUOUS BY THEIR ABSENCE FROM THE RECEPTION, THE COUP WAS NATURALLY THE MAIN TOPIC OF CONVERSATION. I LISTENED. THE INFORMATION IN PARAGRAPH 1 CAME FROM (A) THE CHILEAN AMBASSADOR, WHO WAS SPEAKING TO A GROUP MADE UP OF THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR, THE EDITOR OF EL COMERCIO, AND ME; AND (B) THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR, WHO SPOKE TO ME IN PRIVATE AS WE WERE LEAVING THE RECEPTION. IN NEITHER CASE
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DID I INITIATE A CONVERSATION OR ASK ANY QUESTIONS: I WAS

THE PASSIVE LISTENER. AS FOR THE INFORMATION IN PARAGRAPH 2, THAT CAME FROM MY MAJOR DOMO, VICENTE: THE CAB DRIVER IS HIS COUSIN.

3. MY OWN VIEW IS THAT OUR PROMPT ACTION IN TELLING RODRIGUEZ LARA WHAT WE KNEW ABOUT THE WHEREABOUTS OF GONZALEZ AND THEN IN EXPLAINING THE SITUATION TO HIM PERSONALLY HAS REMOVED ANY SUSPICION THAT MAY HAVE EXISTED.

4. A MODICUM OF MODESTY, TOGETHER WITH THE FACT THAT THE RECENT INSPECTORS HAD THE IMPRESSION FROM SOME PART OF THE WASHINGTON COMMUNITY THAT I WAS SUFFERING FROM CLIENTITIS, KEPT ME FROM REPORTING THAT WHEN I SAW THE PRESIDENT ON SEPTEMBER 3 (QUITO 6540) HE WAS EXTREMELY CORDIAL AND ASKED IF MY WIFE AND I, TOGETHER WITH SOME VISITING RELATIVES, WOULD HAVE DINNER WITH MRS. RODRIGUEZ LARA AND HIM. I REMONSTRATED, SAYING I WAS SURE HE WAS TIRED, BUSY, ETC. HE ASKED ME IF FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, WOULD BE CONVENIENT, AND I SAID IT WOULD. LATER I REMEMBERED THAT FONOFF UNDERSECRETARY WAS GIVING A DINNER FOR AMBASSADORS MOORE AND CLINGAN WHICH I HAD ACCEPTED. I SENT WORD BACK TO THE PALACE ABOUT THAT, AGAIN SAYING THAT I APPRECIATED THE GESTURE, ETC. THE PRESIDENT INSISTED, AND WE DINED WITH THEM, HIS MILITARY AIDE, HIS PROTOCOL AIDE, AND A MAJOR OF THE BATTALION ESCOLATA. IT WAS A RELAXED AND CORDIAL OCCASION. I TOOK IT AND TAKE IT AS A MARK OF HIS CONFIDENCE IN ME. IT WAS A GESTURE NOT PREVIOUSLY ACCORDED ME OR MY PREDECESSOR.

5. MAY I SUGGEST THAT ONE CONCRETE GESTURE WE COULD MAKE TO REASSURE THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE TO DELIVER A MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATION FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE NEW FOREIGN MINISTER? I SUGGESTED THAT BY NIACT IMMEDIATE MESSAGE (QUITO 6675) SENT ON SEPTEMBER 8: DESPITE INQUIRIES, INCLUDING ONE TO HEW RYAN YESTERDAY WHO KNEW NOTHING ABOUT IT, THERE HAS BEEN NO REPLY. IN THE ABSENCE OF A REPLY IT WOULD BE AWKWARD EITHER TO CONGRATULATE THE NEW FOREIGN MINISTER MYSELF OR BEGIN THE COURTESY CALLS I TRADITIONALLY MAKE ON NEW MINISTERS. IF THERE IS FURTHER

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DELAY, THE GOE COULD WELL BEGIN TO QUESTION OUR ATTITUDE. BREWSTER

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